

Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

February 15, 2013

Dear President Obama:

We want to thank you for standing strong in the American Taxpayer Relief Act to protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid from benefit cuts that would jeopardize the well-being of millions of Americans.

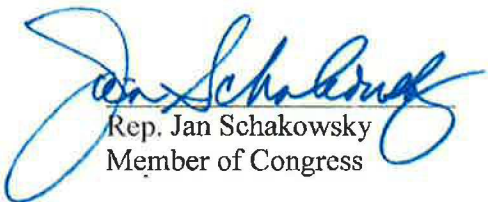
We write to affirm our vigorous opposition to cutting Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid benefits in any final bill to replace sequestration. Earned Social Security and Medicare benefits provide the financial and health protections necessary to keep individuals and families out of poverty. Medicaid is not only a lifeline for low-income children, pregnant women, people with disabilities and families, it is the primary source of long-term care services and supports for 3.6 million individuals. We cannot overstate their importance for our constituents and our country.

That is why we remain deeply opposed to proposals to reduce Social Security benefits through use of the chained CPI to calculate cost-of-living adjustments. We remain committed to making the changes that will extend solvency for 75 years, but Social Security has not contributed to our current fiscal problems and it should not be on the bargaining table.

Similarly, we oppose proposals to increase Medicare cost-sharing requirements or to raise the age of eligibility. Half of all Medicare recipients live on less than \$22,000 a year – yet they spend, on average, three times as much of those limited incomes on health care as other Americans. Raising their already heavy cost-sharing burden or increasing the age of eligibility doesn't lower health care costs, it just shifts them to those who can least afford more financial burdens – seniors, people with disabilities and their families.

A commitment to keeping the middle-class strong and reducing poverty requires a commitment to keeping Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid strong. We urge you to reject any proposals to cut benefits, and we look forward to working with you to enact approaches that instead rely on economic growth and more fair revenue-raising policies to solve our fiscal problems.

Sincerely,



Rep. Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Rep. Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



John Conyers
Member of Congress



Donna Edwards
Member of Congress



Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Nydia Velázquez
Member of Congress



Mel Watt
Member of Congress



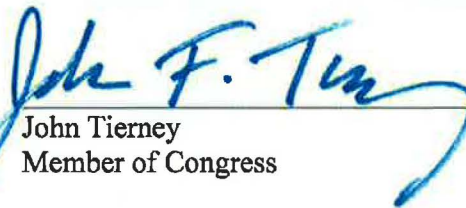
Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Ron Barber
Member of Congress



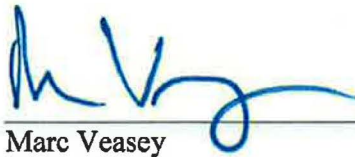
Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress



John Tierney
Member of Congress



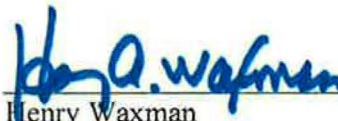
Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Henry Waxman
Member of Congress



Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Eni Faleomavaega
Member of Congress